

An Insubordinate Woman

by Chihori Anigma

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Summary: Eleanor is not happy when the newly made Ministry of Magic passes a law forbidding her to marry the Muggle she loves and when they catch her after she runs away with him and force her to marry a Wizard her adventure to become independent in 17th century Europe begins.

An Insubordinate Woman

Eleanor listened as her father read the Ministry of Magic's new decree outloud to his family and servant.

"'No Wizard may mingle with any person from the non-magical community for any reason, including business transactions, marriage-"

Eleanor jumped up, almost tripping on her long robes as she did so. "How can they dare forbid that?" she half shouted, part of her hoping that her father could overrule it and the other part already making plans to run away if he couldn't.

"Robert won't hurt us-he already knows about magic. Besides, do they think that all the people who want to burn us will forget about us only because we aren't talking to them? I have to go talk to Robert."

"Eleanor, stop!" Her father called, not surprised that his daughter was acting so rashly. Eleanor had always been quick to anger and excite and in those moods she tended to act before thinking. "Talking to a person who is not a Wizard is a felony now. You could be executed for such a thing!" Eleanor stopped and turned around to look at her father who took a breath of relief before continuing. The danger of his daughter doing something foolish and dangerous was not past but if he said things rightly she would listen.

"I'll go to the Ministry of Magic and talk to them. I'm sure they won't be so unreasonable as to not let you marry someone who already knows about magic, especially since he doesn't-is a good man."

He was wrong. The Ministry of Magic would not let Eleanor marry one of the people they called 'Muggles' and told her father that a girl so intent on being insubordinate should be married off quickly to a pure Wizard.

Eleanor didn't agree with them. She packed her clothes and ran away with Robert to Waltham Abbey where they married under a priest. The Ministry of Magic found them and wiped Robert's memory and sent him back to London.

Eleanor, they said, was obviously insubordinate and should be married off as quickly as possible. They found a Wizard and soon she was standing with him in the Ministry's ceremonial halls. She hated him but that did not matter to the Ministry-they wanted more 'pure Wizard' children.

The man was rich enough to have a big enough house that Eleanor could have her own quarters. The only reason she could see that such a rich man would agree to marry an insubordinate such as her was that he was as ugly as a horse.

When they had come home from the wedding the man had tried to pull her into his bedroom but she had pulled away. He had slapped. At first she went numb with surprise. She couldn't remember anyone slapping her since her teachers in Hogwarts and the cook they had had when she was very young. Then she slapped the man as hard as she could.

He had dropped her arm in surprise and she had run away to her own quarters where she stayed for the next few days. Finally the man had grown tired of not seeing her and had entered her quarters to demand that she come out.

To her surprise the old servant who brought her food defended her before she started speaking. "Can't you see she's in shock, the poor thing? Having to get married all in a hurry and surprise. I have no doubt she wanted a proper wedding in a church, like meself."

The man fumed at these words and left. He didn't come again for the next few weeks. Word of the house got around and she heard he was planning a feast. She refused to come when he asked her.

An Owl from the Ministry of Magic landed in her room soon after that. It told her that she must listen to her husband or she would be taken to "that place all insubordinate women go to". She wasn't sure if it meant Hell or a jail. She ignored it.

She woke up when she heard a loud banging on the front door. A moment later Alice, the old servant who brought her her food, entered her room.

"The Ministry is here for you," she whispered. "I know a way out of the house."

"That won't help if the Ministry can find me anywhere in Britain," Eleanor said, not bothering to be quiet. "I'm sorry, Alice."

Alice thought for a moment. "I have a brother who ferries magical items from Brighton to Dieppe-he can smuggle you across. Now get

dressed."

With a wave of her wand Eleanor was dressed and Alice hurriedly led her through a back passage and out onto the streets. An old cart passed by them.

"Excuse me sir, where are you going?"

"I have to be in Croydon by sunup."

"Can you take this young lady with you?"

"I'll pay," Eleanor said hurriedly.

"One pound, and one crown."

Eleanor handed over the money. It was too much but she was in a hurry. From Croydon she climbed on a cart with a family going to visit their mother's family in Crawley Down. The horses were slow from the weight of the many people and sometimes Eleanor felt as if she wanted to kick them but it was still faster than walking which is what she did from Crawley Down to Pease Pottage where she ate breakfast.

At Pease Pottage they told her that at noon a coach came through to Brighton. She waited until the coach came and got on. Two hours later she was in Brighton. She wandered her way through the town to the wharf getting lost many times before she got there.

At the wharf she attracted stares and curses since many sailors believed that women brought bad luck. She ignored the cursers and approached the friendliest faces, asking if they knew a William Berkley. Many of the men ignored her and no one who answered knew who he was.

"Try asking in the inns," one advised her. "Though those are no places for a woman to be," he added.

She asked in the inns anyway. A red-headed landlord told her that William Berkley had a permanent room in the attic and she could go right up. "No business of mine if he has mistresses," he muttered to himself.

Eleanor heard and blushed. In the attic no one answered to her knocking. She tried the second door. Still no one answered. She knocked harder worrying that Alice's brother had gone out and she would have no way to find him. There was a groan from inside and someone opened the door.

William Berkley looked strong yet almost as old as his sister. He was short, shorter than Eleanor and wore a nightshirt.

"I...I'm sorry, I didn't know you were in bed."

"Nevermind that, why did you come? What does a woman want out of an old man like me?" He narrowed his eyes. "You're not traffic, are you? That's against the law and it's shameful as well."

"No. No! Your sister, Alice, sent me. I need to get out of England quickly. I know you ferry magical items across and that you're a

Wizard."

"Alice sent you? I can take you then. I leave at midnight from the wharf on the Jolly Sally."

Eleanor thanked him and left. She sank into a chair in the front room of the inn until evening brought on the customers and the landlord kicked her out. After that she wandered the streets hoping the Ministry wouldn't find her but mostly sad for no reason she could discern. Maybe I'm sorry to be leaving my family without saying goodbye, she thought.

At midnight she was on the wharf next to the Jolly Sally which had taken her a while to find in the dark between all the other boats. By the time she got there she was exhausted and almost crying. Not caring any longer about the state of her clothes she sat down on the ground and leaned her head against the Jolly Sally.

William Berkley came soon after her, fully dressed this time. "Get off the ground," he said. "I want to see how many boxes I'll have to move to hide you." When the boxes were moved Eleanor entered the boat and they were moving towards France.

William muttered a spell enabling him to see clearly and another that Eleanor had never heard, though she realized when William stopped paddling and just moved the tiller slightly, making the boat move the opposite way of where he moved it to that it was a spell that enabled him to move the boat as easily as possible.

By dawn she could see the coast of France and before the sun was very high in the sky they had docked.

"Get out of here before the authorities come and get you," William muttered to her, helping her stand up from the cramped position she was in. These were the first words he had spoken to her since they had left England but she did not mind since it gave her more time to sleep and brood.

Stomping her feet to try and have the pins and needles feeling leave them she walked into the town, looking for an inn. She found one and thankfully paid a minimal amount of money in order to sleep on a flea-ridden bed.

When she woke up it was growing dark outside, her whole body was itching and she didn't feel any happier. She went back to sleep. She woke up again in the morning feeling itchier than ever. She bought a disgusting breakfast and walked outside.

Though she was feeling awful she started walking west. She hoped she could reach Spain where she was sure their Ministerio² de Magia would not turn her over. She paid for a coach with the rest of her money to drive her west for the next four days. She wasn't sure how she would eat and she did not really care.

The first day she ignored it. By the second day she was feeling more awake and she offered to clean the kitchens of the inn they stopped at that night for food. "If you make breakfast you can have some of that, too." She made the breakfast, also. And even though she was exhausted the third day she did the same thing again and was also given lunch.

At the end of the fourth day they came to Bordeaux. The coach owner would continue on to a town on the border of France and Spain but he wouldn't take her since she didn't have anymore money.

She slept on a inn's doorstep that night. In the morning she woke up and wandered the streets until she was standing in front of a hospital. With the help of magic I could be a better nurse than any of them, she thought and knocked.

"Do you need any nurses?" she asked the man who answered the door without greeting him properly. He looked her up and down. Her dirty clothes, her dishevelled hair.

"Are you trained?"

"Yes." Seven years of Herbology in Hogwarts probably counted as training.

"Then come in."

So Eleanor became a nurse in a small hospital in Bordeaux. She earned enough to support herself after paying first for the nurse outfit the hospital had her wear and stayed carefully away from men. She missed her family but she was too scared to show any sign that she was still alive in case the Ministry came after her again. She comforted herself by saying that if she had stayed with the man she would have hardly seen her family as it was.

A few years later she met a man she bumped into accidentally at the market and fell in love. He was unmarried and they built a house together that they filled with children. They named them Alice, Guillaume or Guy for short and LeÃ²nide after her husband.

LeÃ²nide was sent to a special school in the mountains while Alice and Guillaume were tutored at home before their apprenticeship. They were all very happy.

A/N: Names- Eleanor, Alice and William are all on a list of the most popular names in America in the 17th century.

Guillaume is William in French.

There really is a place called Pease Pottage.

My headcanon is that the Ministry of Magic started calling non-magical people 'Muggles' when they passed the Statute of Secrecy because in America which mainly has wizards who moved there before the Statute of Secrecy they are called No-Majs and not Muggles.

Challenges: Journey Through Hogwarts, The Lolita Challenge, The 2016 Monthly Prompt Challenge

Prompts: Over 2000 words (2033), Write about wanting freedom, [Cliche] Marriage Law

End
file.